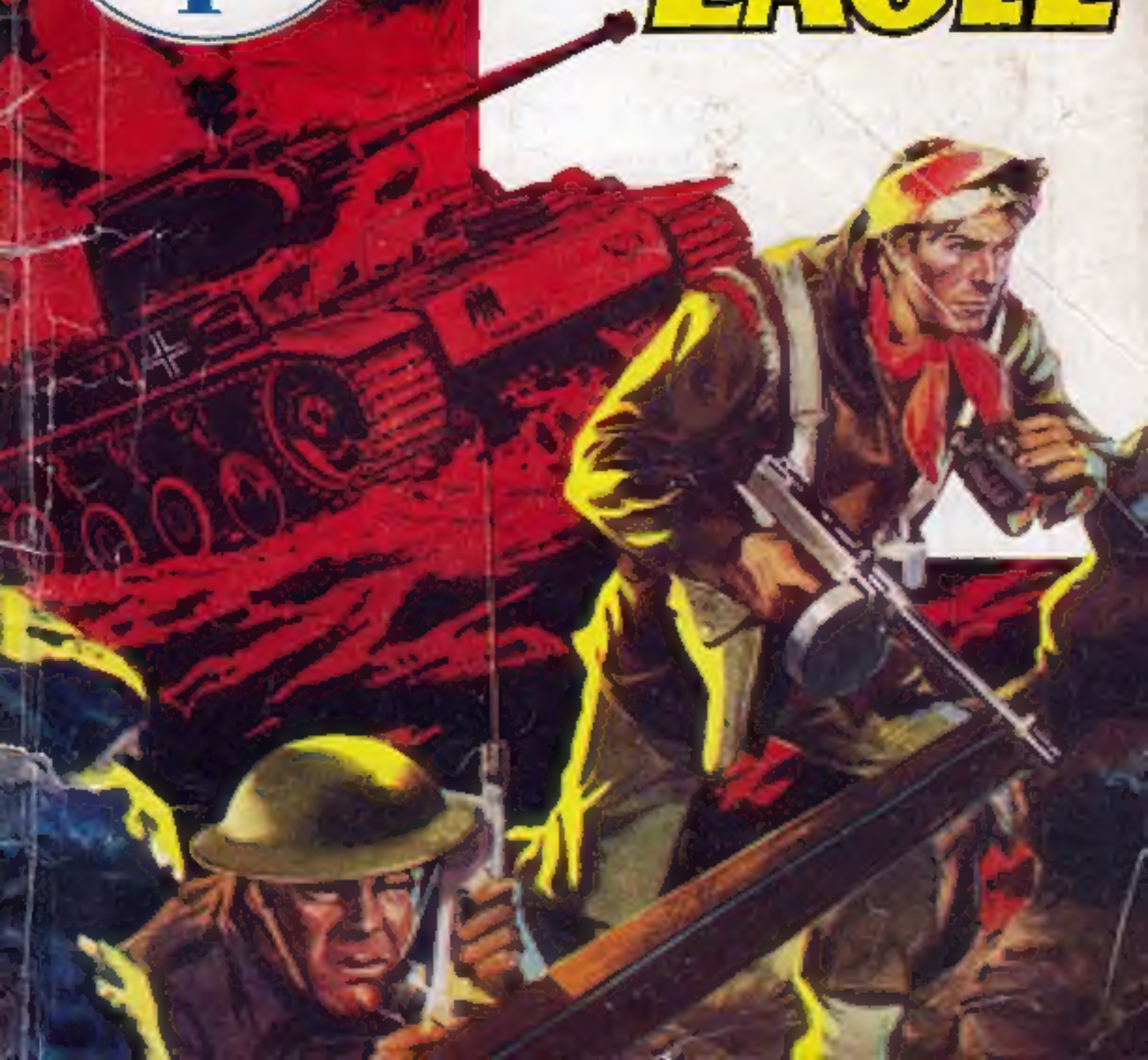




# THE MARK OF THE EAGLE



4

**ALL-ACTION ISSUES EVERY MONTH**★ No. 61 **DEATH TRAP**

*Like a monstrous god of war, Hill 60 demanded a sacrifice !*

★ No. 62 **NIGHT OF THE DEVIL**

*The fate of the lonely patrol was hidden in the nightmare jungle !*

★ No. 63 **CHALLENGE**

*The war was too far away for these red-blooded men of action !*

★ No. 64 **THE VICIOUS CIRCLE**

*Clawed from the sky, they would not admit defeat !*

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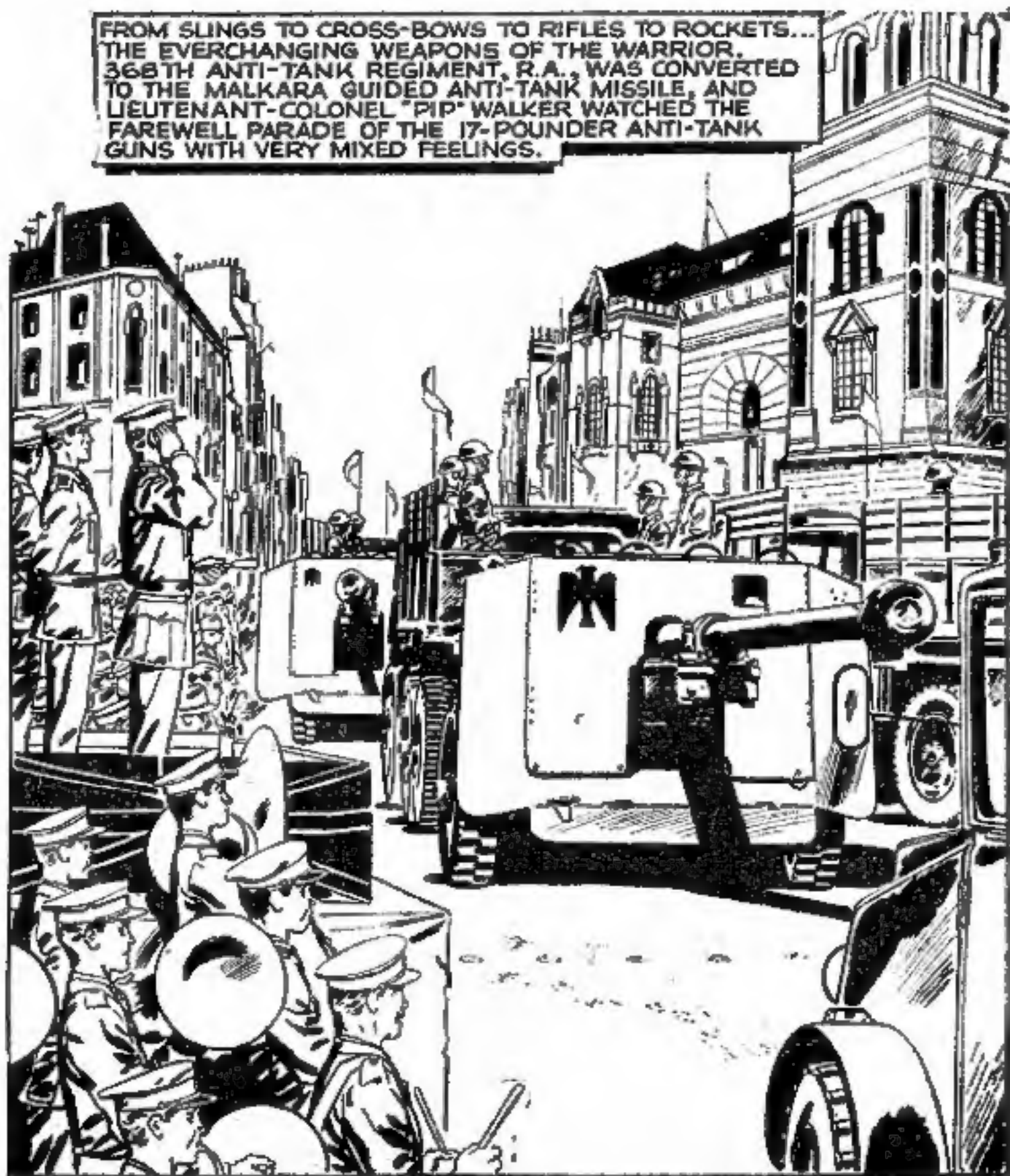




# The MARK of the EAGLE

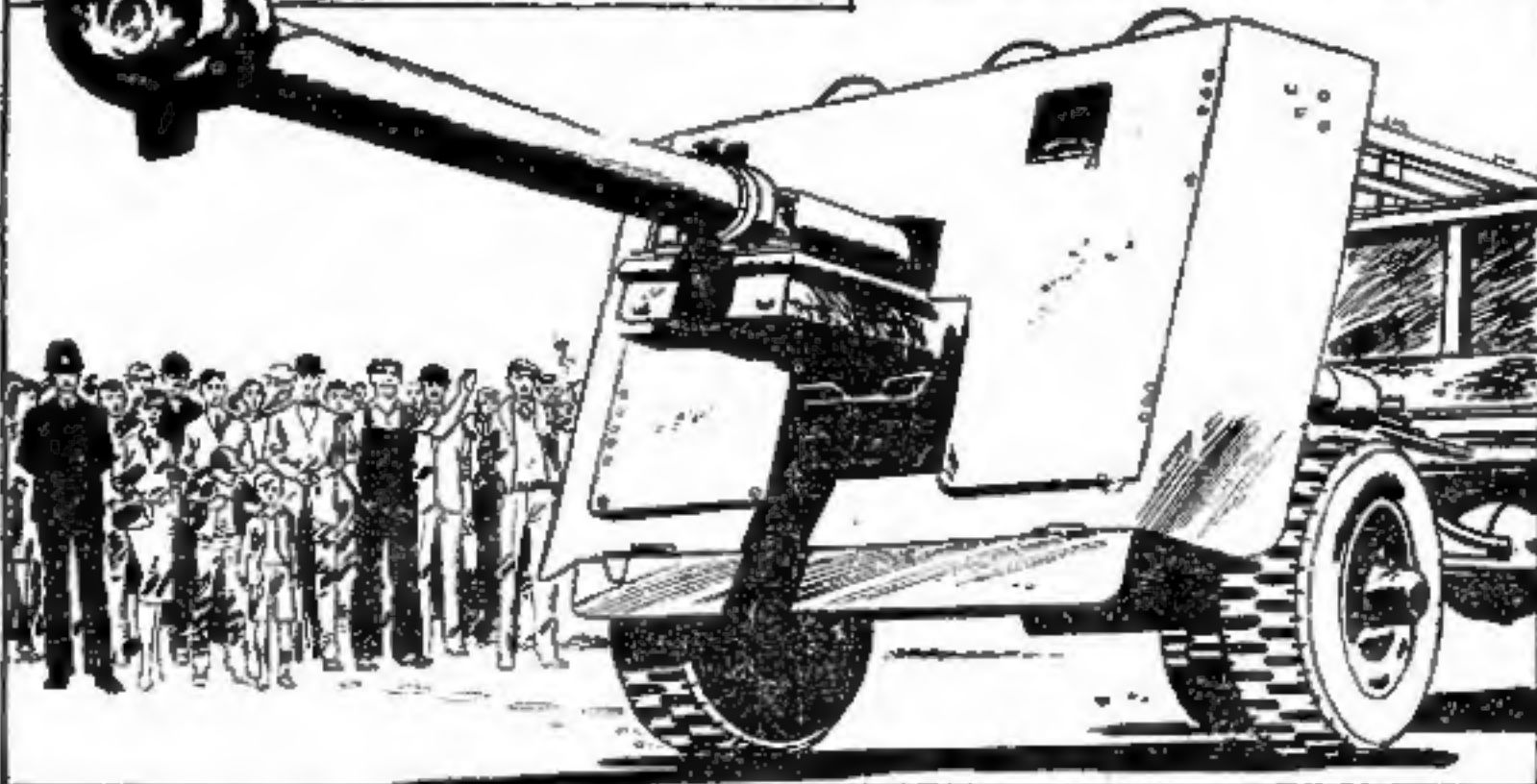
FROM SLINGS TO CROSS-BOWS TO RIFLES TO ROCKETS...  
THE EVERCHANGING WEAPONS OF THE WARRIOR.  
368TH ANTI-TANK REGIMENT, R.A., WAS CONVERTED  
TO THE MALKARA GUIDED ANTI-TANK MISSILE, AND  
LIEUTENANT-COLONEL "PIP" WALKER WATCHED THE  
FAREWELL PARADE OF THE 17-POUNDER ANTI-TANK  
GUNS WITH VERY MIXED FEELINGS.

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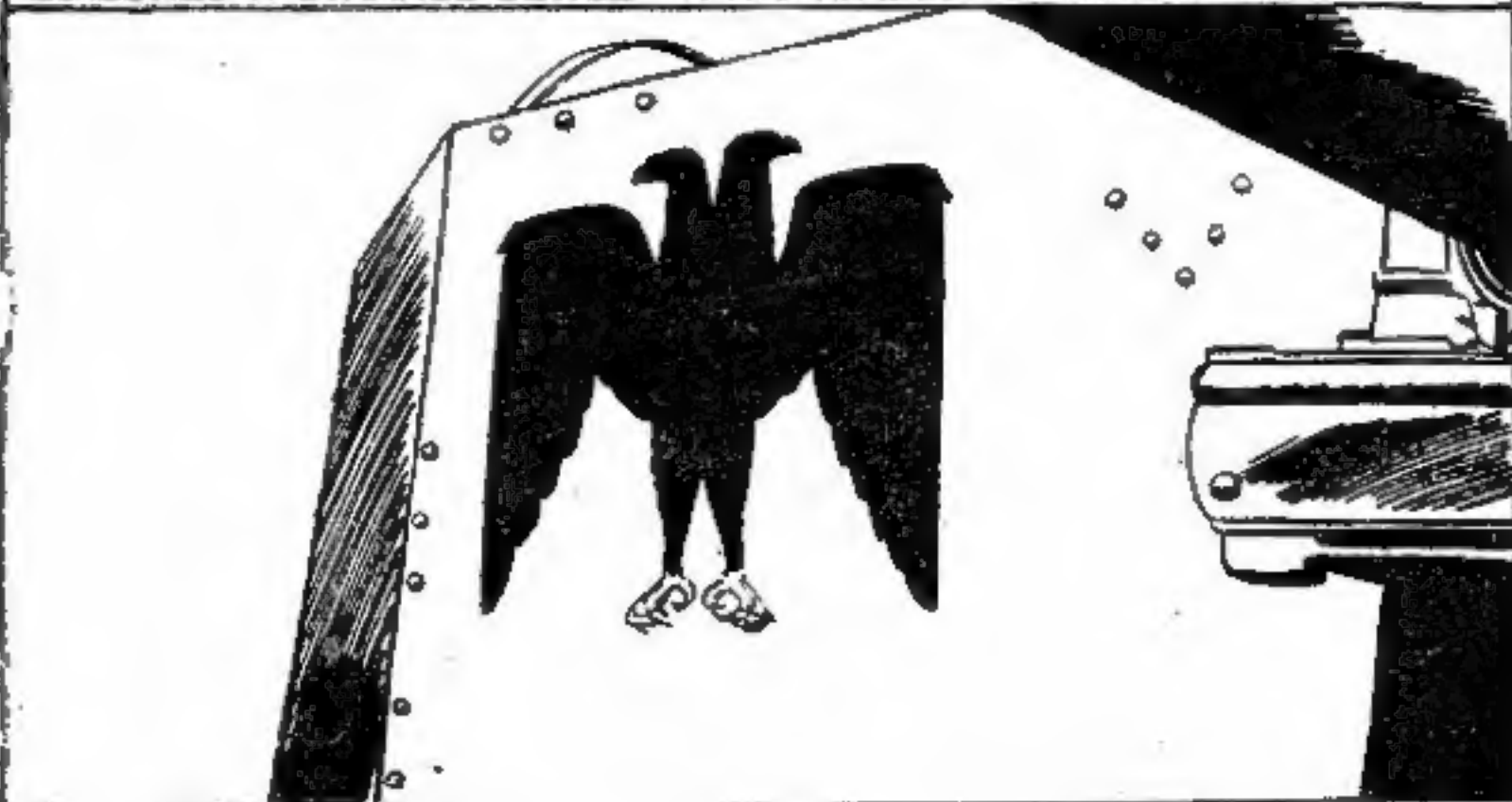


## Chapter 1. Farewell to Arms

SAND, MUD, DUST — THOSE GUNS HAD SEEN PLENTY OF DIRT. NOW THEY GLEAMED AND GLISTENED IN AN ENGLISH SUN. LIKE OLD SOLDIERS, THE VETERAN GUNS WERE STILL AS SMART AS GUARDSMEN ON PARADE.



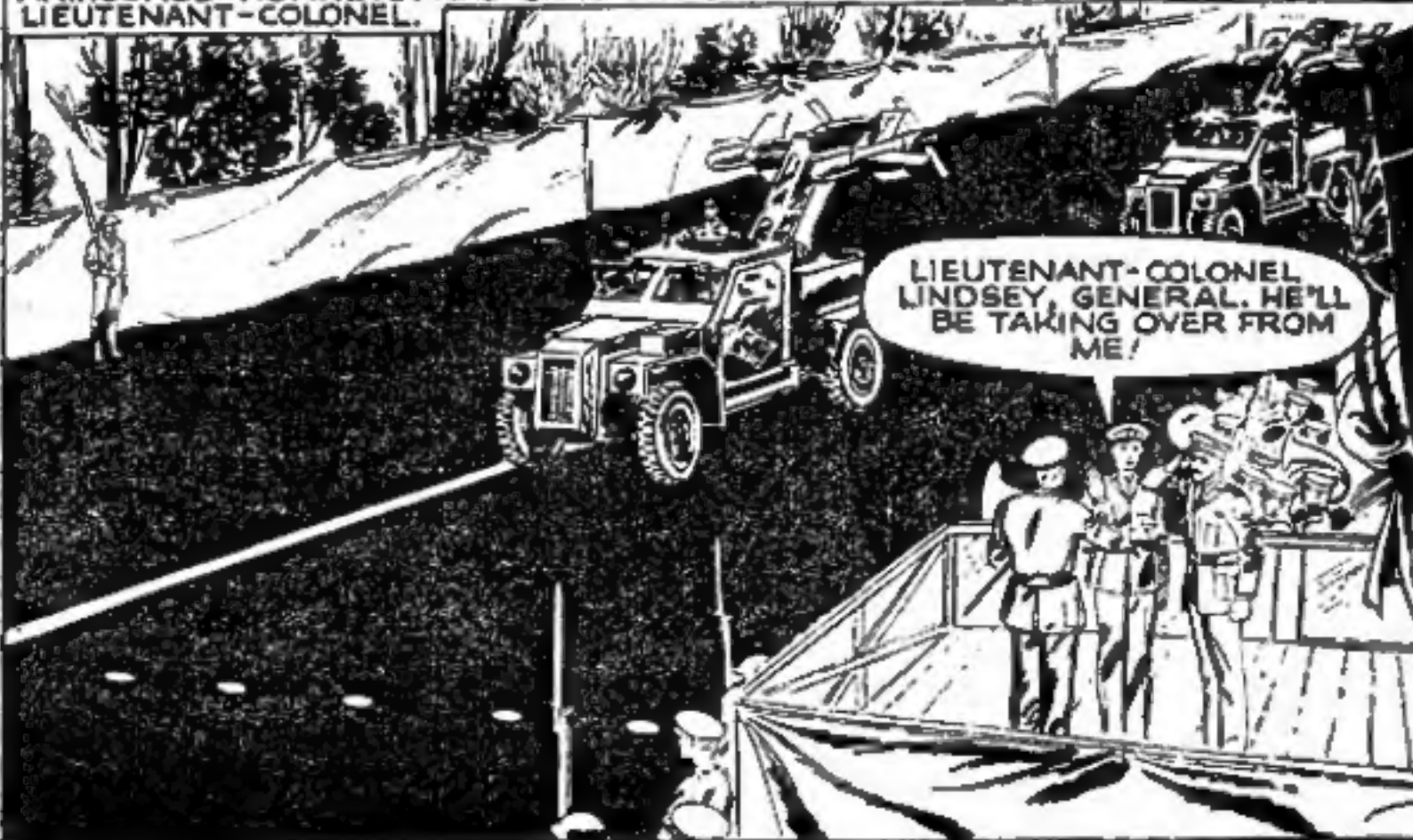
THREE BATTERIES, EACH OF TWO TROOPS, EACH TROOP WITH FOUR GUNS. TWENTY FOUR GUNS IN ALL. AND ON THE GUNSHIELDS OF 'E' TROOP WAS BLAZONED A STRANGE DEVICE — A TWO-HEADED GERMAN EAGLE ...



AS THE STRAINS OF 'AULD LANG SYNE' GREW FAINTER, FADING AS THE LAST GUN MUZZLES DREW AWAY, THE GENERAL SPOKE TO PIP WALKER...



THE BAND SWUNG INTO A STIRRING MARCH. ON TO THE PARADE GROUND CAME THE NEW WEAPONS—THE ROCKET-POWERED MALKARAS MOUNTED ON THEIR ARMoured HORNETS. AND ON TO THE DAIS STEPPED ANOTHER, YOUNGER LIEUTENANT-COLONEL.





# The Mark Of The Eagle

THAT NIGHT THE REGIMENT CELEBRATED. IN THE SERGEANTS' MESS, R.S.M. JOE PRICE STOOD TALKING TO THE MAN WHO WAS TAKING HIS PLACE.

IT'S BEEN A GOOD MESS, TUG, BUT IT'S CHANGING! THEY SEEM TO HAND OUT THREE STRIPES TO ANY KID!

ALL BRAINY BOYS, JOE. ELECTRONIC WIZARDS!

BUT JOE'S EYES LIT UP AS HE GLANCED AT THE DOOR.

GOOD! THERE'S PIP WALKER AND COLONEL LINDSEY. I ASKED THEM TO DROP IN FOR A DRINK.

AS THE TWO OLD FRIENDS TALKED ANIMATEDLY, LINDSEY AND THE NEW R.S.M. WATCHED THEM...

I'VE GOT  
A SMASHING  
JOB LINED UP,  
SIR. SECURITY  
GUARD - PROPER  
STEADY.

I'VE BOUGHT  
A LITTLE FARM  
DOWN IN WILTSHIRE,  
MISTER PRICE.



THEN, IN A MOMENT OF SILENCE, THE  
LAUGHING VOICE OF ONE OF THE  
YOUNG SERGEANTS WAS HEARD...

ONE GOOD THING,  
ANYWAY - 'EASY' TROOP  
WON'T HAVE TO PAINT THAT  
DAFT TWO-HEADED DUCK  
ON THEIR NEW PROJECTORS!



JOE PRICE WENT RED IN THE FACE, WITH  
A QUICK WORD OF EXCUSE TO HIS C.O.,  
HE SWUNG ROUND, STIFF AS A RAMROD.  
HIS VOICE WAS AS COLD AS STEEL.

SERGEANT DIXON/  
ANOTHER CRACK  
LIKE THAT AND YOU'LL  
LEAVE THE MESS!  
UNDERSTAND?



## The Mark Of The Eagle

DIXON GULPED, WENT RED IN THE FACE, AND SAT DOWN AGAIN...



'E' TROOP'S EAGLE SYMBOL HELD A SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR BOTH PIP WALKER AND JOE PRICE...





BUT IT WAS NOT ONLY THE SERGEANTS WHO WERE TO HEAR THE STORY. LIEUTENANT-COLONEL LINDSEY'S CURIOSITY HAD BEEN STIRRED...



I THINK I'LL STAY, PIP. I'D LIKE TO HEAR ABOUT THIS EAGLE BUSINESS...

ALL RIGHT, GENTLEMEN! FILL YOUR GLASSES AND SETTLE DOWN. TONIGHT YOU'RE GOING TO HEAR THE STORY OF "EASY" TROOP'S EAGLE...



GLAD YOU'RE STAYING, COLONEL LINDSEY, SIR. YOU SEE, THIS IS REALLY CAPTAIN... I MEAN, COLONEL PIP WALKER'S STORY...

## Chapter 2. *Bird of Prey*

IN 1944, THE COMMANDER OF 'E' TROOP WAS CAPTAIN 'PIP' WALKER, THE TROOP SIGNALLER BEING BOMBARDIER JOE PRICE. FOR THEM THE WAR HAD MEANT TWO YEARS IN THE DESERT, THE SICILIAN CAMPAIGN, THE NORMANDY LANDINGS AND THE INCESSANT SLOGGING BATTLES AFTERWARDS...



THAT SEPTEMBER DAY THE 21ST ARMY GROUP WAS FIGHTING ITS WAY THROUGH TO A RHINE BRIDGE AT ARNHEM, PRECARIOUSLY HELD BY THE AIRBORNE DIVISION.





THEY WERE ON THE FLANK OF THE ONLY ROAD LEADING THROUGH EINDHOVEN AND NIJMEGEN TO THE PARATROOPS' POSITION. THE ROAD WAS UNDER HARD ENEMY PRESSURE.

OKAY, WILCO, BUT I MUST HAVE MORE AMMO.



IT HAD BEEN FOUR DAYS SINCE THE ARNHEM BRIDGE HAD BEEN CAPTURED. THE ROAD WAS THE LAST LIFE-LINE TO THE MEN OF THE AIRBORNE DIVISION.

WARN THE WAGON-LINES! THERE ARE JERRY TIGER TANKS HEADING THIS WAY.



TIGERS? OKAY, SIR.

"E" TROOP HAD NOT TANGLED WITH SUCH HEAVY GERMAN ARMOUR BEFORE, BUT PIP KNEW THAT ALL GUNS WERE WELL SITED AND THEIR COMMANDERS PREPARED FOR ACTION.



IF ONLY EACH GUN HAD ANOTHER TEN ROUNDS ARMOUR-PIERCING!

# The Mark Of The Eagle

DIP WENT TO SPEAK A FINAL WORD TO SECOND-LIEUTENANT JOHN FAWLEY. A RECENT REPLACEMENT, FAWLEY WAS IN CHARGE OF NUMBER ONE GUN.



BEYOND THE CREST OF THE RISE, OUT OF SIGHT OF EASY TROOP'S POSITION, THREE HUGE TIGER TANKS WERE HUMBLING FORWARD. LINE AFTER LINE ON EACH HULL WAS THEIR REGIMENTAL EMBLEM - A BLACK TWO-HEADED GERMAN EAGLE.





THE FIRST TANK CREEPT OVER THE CREST, MOVING OBLIQUELY INTO THE FIRING ARC OF NUMBER ONE GUN. A DIFFICULT TARGET, BUT YOUNG JOHN FAWLEY WAS ANXIOUS TO GET HIS FIRST TANK. HE RATTLED OUT HIS FIRE ORDERS...



QUICKLY, FAWLEY ESTIMATED THE DISTANCE THE GUN SHOULD BE AIMED AHEAD OF THE TANK TO COMPENSATE FOR ITS FORWARD MOTION



FROM H & B PREPARED RANGE CARD, HE ESTIMATED THE DISTANCE OF THE TANK FROM THE TREES. AND THE TREES WERE AT 1,000 YARDS RANGE...



## The Mark Of The Eagle

IT WAS A TRICKY SHOT, ONE THAT A MORE EXPERIENCED COMMANDER WOULD HAVE AVOIDED. THE FIRST ROUND WOULD HAVE TO BE A KILLER. AFTER THAT, THE ENEMY WOULD BE ALERT, THE PRESENCE AND POSITION OF THE ANTI-TANK GUNS KNOWN...



IT WAS A MISS/ THE LEADING TANK IMMEDIATELY SWUNG TO MEET THE THREAT, PRESENTING THE HEAVY ARMOUR OF ITS FRONT TO THE ATTACK. THE OTHER GUNS OPENED UP, BUT THE ADVANTAGE OF SURPRISE WAS GONE

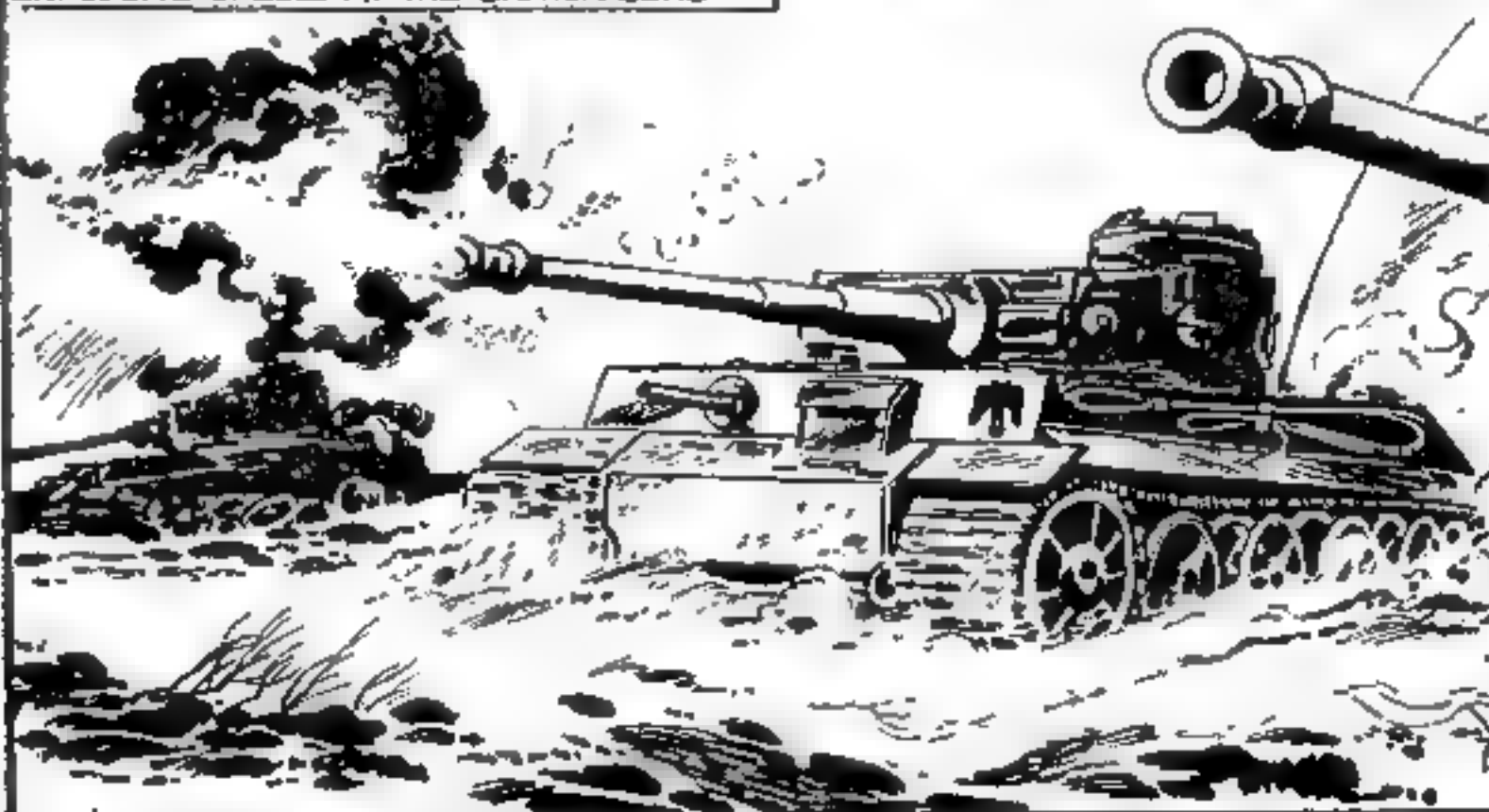




THE TIGER WAS VULNERABLE ONLY BETWEEN THE BOGIES, AT THE AMMUNITION RACK OR AT THE ENGINE COMPARTMENTS. IT WAS NUMBER TWO GUN WHICH SCORED THE HIT ON THE ENGINE, BRINGING FLAMING DESTRUCTION TO THE ARMoured MONSTER.

GOOD SHOOTING,  
NUMBER TWO / WATCH  
THE CREST-THERE'S  
SOMETHING THERE.

WARNED BY FAWLEY'S FIRST SHOT, THE OTHER TWO TANKS HAD KEPT BELOW THE CREST. NOW THEY EDGED FORWARD TO THE ATTACK. THEIR LONG GUN BARRELS BLASTING HIGH EXPLOSIVE SHELLS AT THE BRITISH GUNS



## The Mark Of The Eagle

JOHN FAWLEY PAID A HIGH PENALTY FOR HIS IMPETUOUS HANDLING OF HIS FIRST ACTION. A TIGER SHELL EXPLODED IN HIS GUN PIT.



AS THE WOUNDED MEN DRAGGED THEMSELVES OUT OF THE FIRING PIT, THE THREE REMAINING GUNS FORCED THE TWO TIGERS TO WITHDRAW BEHIND THE PROTECTION OF THE CREST





BOTH SIDES PAUSED. THE INITIATIVE WAS NOW WITH THE ENEMY. IF THEY CHOSE, THEY COULD MAKE IT A SHELL FOR SHELL SLOGGING MATCH.

AMMO'S GETTING SHORT. WE MUST PLAY FOR TIME - AND TRY TO GET THOSE POOR DEVILS OUT OF NUMBER ONE PIT.



THE GERMANS HAD ALWAYS RESPECTED A TRUCE FOR THE RECOVERY OF WOUNDED. PIP CALLED UP THE MEDICAL CORPORAL AND ORDERLY...

CORPORAL - BRING THOSE TWO MEN IN FROM NUMBER ONE PIT. JERRY WILL RESPECT YOUR ARMBANDS.

RIGHT, SIR. COME ON, LET'S GO!



## The Mark Of The Eagle

THE MEDICS HURRIED ON THEIR MERCY MISSION, THE GERMAN TANK TROOP COMMANDER MADE HIS DECISION. ONE TIGER BREASTED THE CREST PIP WALKER HELD HIS FIRE.



WITHOUT INTERFERENCE FROM 'E' TROOP, THE TIGER TRAVERSED ITS GUN - AND FIRED AT THE SMALL GROUP IN NUMBER ONE PIT.



THE OUTBURST OF FIRING FROM 'EASY' TROOP CAUSED BOTH TANKS TO WITHDRAW. PIP LOOKED AT THE TANK SHATTERED IN THE EARLY STAGES OF THE BATTLE.

A BLACK EAGLE SYMBOL / I'LL RECOGNISE THAT REGIMENT AGAIN - AND I WON'T FORGET THEM!



IT WAS JOE PRICE WHO BROUGHT PIP BACK TO EARTH WITH AN URGENT MESSAGE

WARNING ORDER FROM BATTERY H.Q., SIR. TROOP TO BE PREPARED TO MOVE AT THIRTY MINUTES' NOTICE.

THANKS, BOMBARDIER!





## Chapter 3. *Fuel for the Flames*

AS ALL THE WORLD KNOWS, THE 21ST ARMY GROUP FAILED TO REACH ARNHEM AND STALEMATE DEVELOPED IN OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER. IN THE MOUNTAINOUS, WOODED AREA OF THE ARDENNES, AN AMERICAN ARMY STOOD BEFORE THE SIEGFRIED LINE. BEHIND THE FRONT, OVER TRAILS AND ROADS MATTED WITH STRAW TO MUFFLE THE NOISE, 250,000 GERMANS, 1,900 GUNS AND 970 TANKS WERE SLOWLY MOVING WEST TO THEIR ATTACK POSITIONS. THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE WAS ABOUT TO BEGIN...



RAMPS WERE THROWN ACROSS THE DRAGON'S TEETH OF THE SIEGERIED LINE, AND THE 60-TON TANKS RUMBLING OVER THEM. THE EXCITEMENT OF OLD VICTORIES WAS RISING IN THE GERMAN ARMY, ONCE MORE THEY WERE TO ATTACK!



NEXT MORNING THE GERMANS STRUCK ALL ALONG THE FRONT A TREMENDOUS NON-STOP BARRAGE OF EIGHTY EIGHTS, MORTARS AND FOURTEEN-INCH SHELLS FROM RAILWAY GUNS, BATTERED THE AMERICAN POSITIONS



## The Mark Of The Eagle

THE ENEMY STREAMED THROUGH THE ARDENNES. AT LAST, BRITISH UNITS WERE PUSHED INTO THE NORTHERN HALF OF THE BATTLEFIELD. PIP WALKER'S TROOP, AGAIN UP TO STRENGTH, DROVE UP TO THE FRONT

COR!  
THOSE BLOKES  
LOOK AS IF THEY  
HAVE TAKEN  
A BEATING!



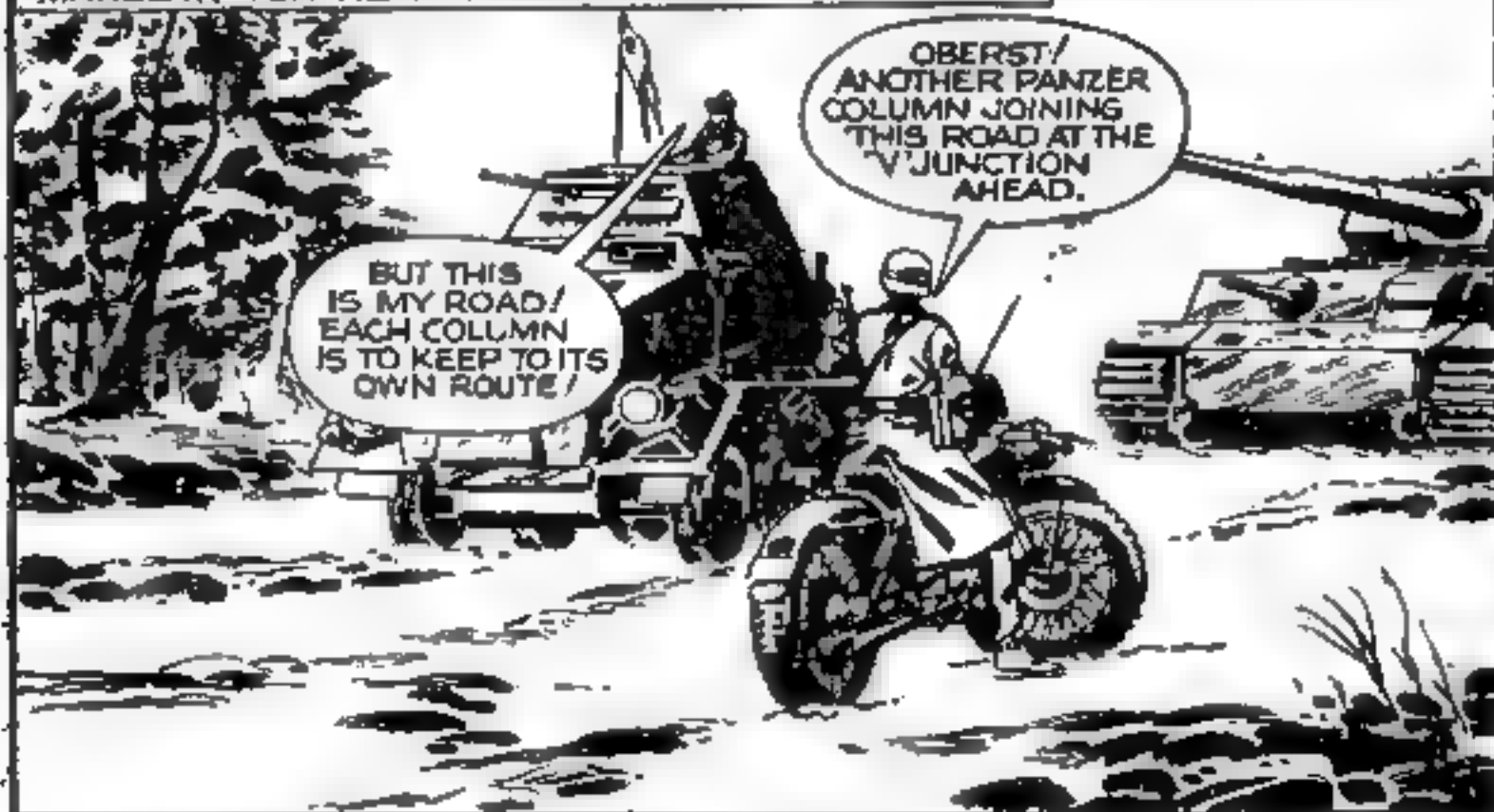
MEANWHILE, WITHIN THE GERMAN LINES, FRESH TROOPS RUSHED TO THE FRONT. OBERST VON KLING WATCHED THIS WAS TO BE ANOTHER BLITZKRIEG, HITLER SAID. BUT THE OBERST WONDERED

THEY ARE  
MERE BOYS!  
IT IS CRIMINAL  
TO SEND THEM  
INTO BATTLE!





VON KUNG'S PANZER COLUMN OF TIGERS, EVERY VEHICLE BEARING THE BLACK DOUBLE-HEADED EAGLE OF THE HOHLZERNDORFFS, THUNDERED ALONG ITS ALLOTTED ROAD WHICH LED DIRECTLY TO THE AMERICAN PETROL DUMP AT MANSLAY. VON KUNG NEEDED PETROL BADLY. THEN...



IN HIS ARMoured CAR HE ROARED AHEAD OF HIS TANKS, FURIOUS AT THE INEFFICIENCY OF THE RIVAL UNIT.



AS HE REACHED THE BEND IN THE ROAD, THE FIRST TANK OF THE S.S. COLUMN HAD ALREADY PULLED ON TO THE MAIN ROAD...



VON KLING ORDERED HIS DRIVER TO BLOCK THE SECOND S S TANK FROM THE MAIN ROAD. FROM THE LEADING TANK LEAPT A FURIOUS YOUNG S. S. LIEUTENANT-COLONEL.



IN THE OLD DAYS THERE HAD BEEN COMRADESHIP BETWEEN THE PANZER UNITS, BUT THOSE DAYS HAD GONE. VON KLING SPOKE COLDLY TO THE ARROGANT YOUNG OFFICER...





VON KLING HAD EXPECTED SUCH A RETORT. THE YOUNG OFFICER, A STAUNCH NAZI, WAS SAID TO HAVE HIGH-RANKING FRIENDS IN THE GESTAPO...

ARE YOU THREATENING ME WITH YOUR CONTEMPTIBLE NAZI FRIENDS, KLEIST?



VON KLING EXPLODED! KLEIST'S INSULT TO HIS KING TIGER TANKS HAD BEEN THE ONE THING THAT HAD TOUCHED HIM ON THE RAW.





THERE WERE TEARS OF RAGE AND HUMILIATION IN THE EYES OF THE FUMING S.S. OFFICER. BUT HE DID AS HE WAS TOLD. WITH A MAN LIKE VON KLING, ONE DID NOT TAKE CHANCES.

FORWARD, KLEIST!  
YOU CAN LEAD THE  
WAY. THEN WAIT FOR  
THE REST OF YOUR  
KAMPFGRUPPE AT  
THE GASOLINE  
DUMP.



THE PETROL DUMP AT MANSLEY WAS TEN MILES AHEAD. WHILE THE GERMANS WERE STILL MILES OFF, OTHER VISITORS HAD ARRIVED — "EASY" TROOP, LED BY CAPTAIN PIP WALKER.



ONLY A SMALL REAR-PARTY OF AMERICAN ENGINEER TROOPS WAS LEFT AT THE PETROL DUMP.

IT LOOKS AS IF THIS IS AS FAR AS WE GO. WE'RE SUPPOSED TO HELP PROTECT THIS DUMP.

PROTECT IT! SOME CHANCE, BUDDY! THAT KRAUT ARMOUR'LL EAT YOU FOR BREAKFAST!



THE AMERICAN OFFICER WAS RIGHT. ONE ANTI-TANK TROOP STOOD LITTLE CHANCE AGAINST AN ENEMY ARMoured UNIT DEGERATE FOR THE PETROL...

WE'RE GOING TO BLOW THIS LOT SKY-HIGH. YOU GUYS BACK-TRACK BEFORE YOU GET YOUR GUNS SCORCHED!

PITY, I'D LIKE TO CHALK UP A TARGET AFTER COMING ALL THIS WAY



SAY, YOU'RE RIGHT! I HAD A PLAN TO CATCH ME A KRAUT TANK, BUT IT NEEDED TANK DESTROYER SUPPORT. NOW, BY JIMINEY, YOU'VE BROUGHT JUST THAT!



## The Mark Of The Eagle

QUICKLY THEY DISCUSSED HIS PLAN. THEN, WHILE PIP DEPLOYED HIS GUNS TO COVER THE APPROACH ROAD FROM THE EAST, THE AMERICANS PILED THEIR TRUCK WITH FIVE GALLON CANS OF PETROL ..



THE DUMP WAS ON HIGH GROUND. TOWARDS THE GERMAN LINES, THE ROAD DROPPED STEEPLY. THE ENGINEERS BEGAN TO PLANT THEIR CANS.





THE "E" TROOP GUNS WERE HIDDEN, SCREENED BY TREE BRANCHES. ALREADY THE POWERFUL ROAR OF TANK MOTORS COULD BE HEARD AS THE MONSTERS CUMBED THE HILL.

SIGNAL HEADQUARTERS,  
BOMBARDIER I WANT TO TALK  
TO THE BATTERY  
COMMANDER.

I'LL TRY, SIR —  
WE'RE OUT OF RANGE,  
I RECKON.

MEANWHILE, AMONG THE STACKED PETROL CANS, AN AMERICAN ENGINEER HAD PLACED A SINGLE STICK OF GELIGNITE ON A SHORT TIME-FUSE.

THAT SHOULD  
GIVE THE KRAUTS  
SOMETHING TO  
THINK ABOUT!



AS THE FIRST TANK REACHED THE TOP OF THE HILL, ITS MOTORS RUNNING HOT WITH THE EFFORT OF THE LONG CLIMB, THE EXPLOSIVE CHARGE BLEW UP IN THE STACKED PETROL CANS. A TORRENT OF ROARING FLAME POURED DOWN ON THE S.S. TANK. THE ARMoured BOX BECAME A SEARING OVEN.



IN A MOMENT OF SUDDEN PITY, PIP CLOSED HIS EYES. WAR WAS ALWAYS FRIGHTFUL - BUT NOT ALWAYS AS FRIGHTFUL AS THIS / HIS GUNS ROARED, TO ADD TO THE INFERNO.



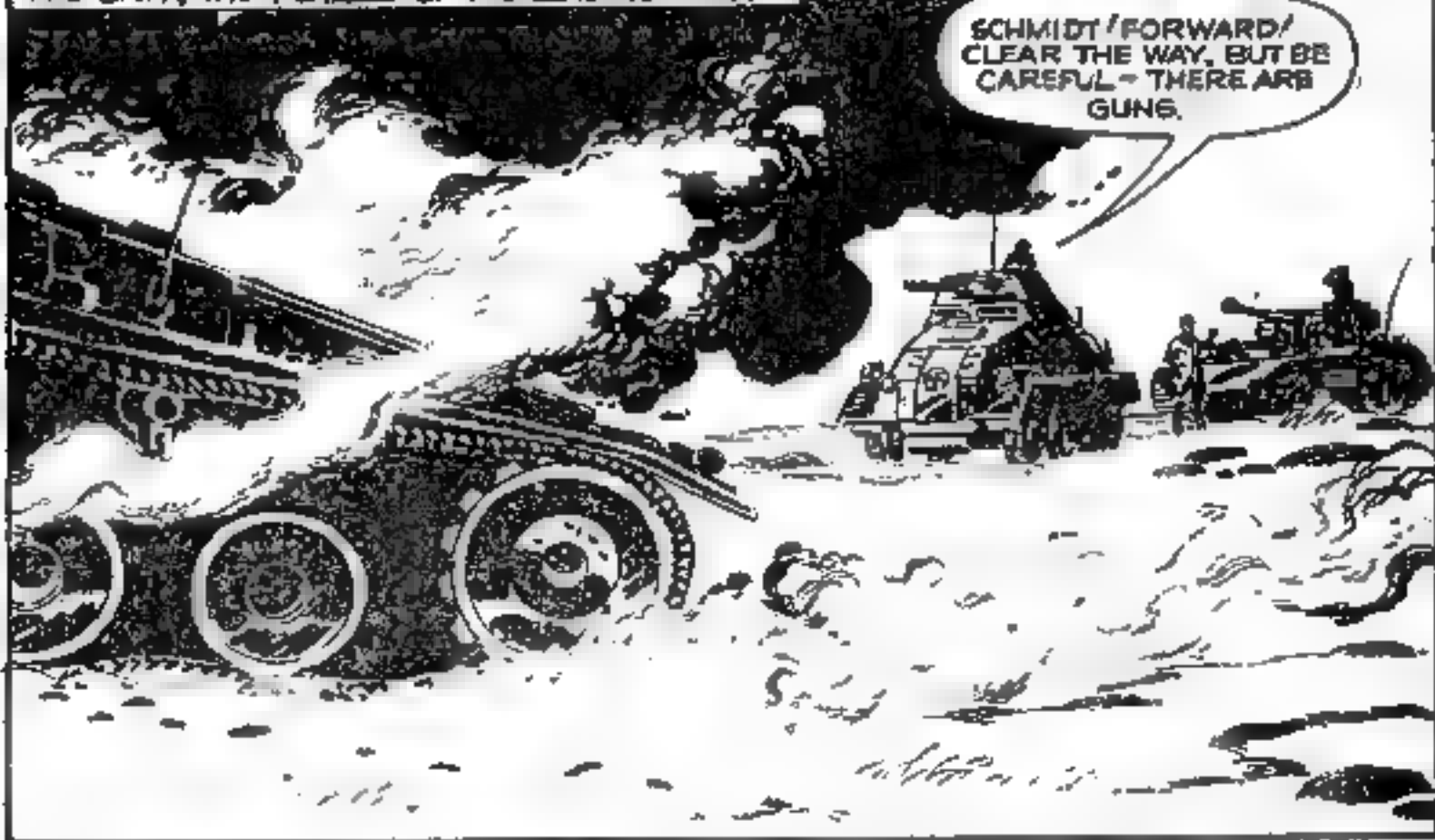
ONLY THE AMERICAN ENGINEER, HALF-CRAZY WITH EXHAUSTION, GLOATED AT THE SUCCESS OF HIS PLAN.





KLEIST, THE MAN WHO HAD TRESPASSED ON VON KLING'S ROAD, PERISHED IN THE INFERNO. FARTHER BACK, VON KLING HALTED HIS UNIT, THEN CALLED UP HIS LEADING TANK

SCHMIDT / FORWARD /  
CLEAR THE WAY, BUT BE  
CAREFUL - THERE ARE  
GUNS.



PIP WALKER, WATCHING THE APPROACH OF VON KLING'S FIRST TANK, SAW THE SYMBOL ON THE TURRET.

D GRIEF /  
THE DOUBLE-HEADED  
EAGLE / IT'S THAT  
MURDERING MOB  
AGAIN!



IN THE TROOP H.Q. TRUCK, JOE PRICE TRIED VAINLY TO RAISE THE BATTERY COMMANDER.

ROVER FIVE  
CALLING ROVER  
O'S E COME IN  
ROVER ONE-

FROM THEIR CONCEALED POSITIONS, ALL FOUR GUNS OF THE TROOP FUNNELLED THEIR FIRE ON TO THE TIGER AS IT BREASTED THE CREST OF THE HILL.

KEEP HIM BUSY,  
YOU LIMEYS! WE'VE  
GOT TO HAVE TIME TO  
BLOW THE GASOLINE  
UP!

PIP HAD ALMOST FORGOTTEN THE PETROL DUMP, IT WOULD HAVE TO BE DESTROYED. BUT COULD "EASY" TROOP HOLD OFF THE ATTACK FOR LONG ENOUGH?

MOVE FAST,  
YANK. BUT GIVE  
ME TIME TO GET  
MY BOYS OUT  
BEFORE YOU  
LIGHT THE  
MATCH!

SURE  
THING!

# The Mark Of The Eagle

VON KLING WAS IN TROUBLE. HIS LEADING TANK, HIT REPEATEDLY, WAS ALREADY A CASUALTY. AND FROM THEIR POSITION ON THE STEEP HILL, THE OTHER TANKS COULD NOT BRING EFFECTIVE FIRE TO BEAR.



LISTENING IN ON THE OPPOSING WIRELESS NET WAS A FAVOURITE TRICK OF THE GERMANS. VON KLING LISTENED TO JOE'S EFFORTS TO RAISE BATTERY H.Q.



A MINOR DEADLOCK HAD DEVELOPED. TWO TANKS WERE OUT OF ACTION, BUT "E" TROOP COULD NOT GET THEIR SIGHTS ON THE OTHERS UNTIL THEY CAME OVER THE HILL. AND THE TANKS COULD NOT HIT BACK FROM THEIR PRESENT POSITION ...



SUDDENLY, AS JOE TURNED THE KNOBS OF HIS RAD O, HE HEARD A VOICE ...



IT WAS VON KLING, HE WAS TRYING TO PARLEY





MAKING TERMS WITH GERMANS WAS NOT IN PIP'S BOOK. YET HE WOULD HAVE TO PULL BACK SHORTLY...



THE OBERST GRUNTED. HE REMEMBERED THE INCIDENT, BUT HE COULD NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR EVERY TRIGGER-HAPPY GUNNER IN HIS UNIT. IT HAD BEEN SAD - BUT UNAVOIDABLE...

FOR THAT, THERE WAS NO EXCUSE. THE GUNNER WAS TOO EAGER, NOT FULLY TRAINED. I AM SORRY, NOW - DO YOU RETREAT?



WITH THE AMERICAN ENGINEER OFFICER GIVING THE WARNING THAT THE DUMP WAS READY FOR DEMOLITION, PIP ACCEPTED THE TERMS. IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE TO TRAP MORE TANKS IN FLAMING DESTRUCTION! HE ORDERED H.S. GUNS OUT



WITH PIP WALKER'S ASSURANCE THAT HIS GUNS HAD PULLED OUT, VON KLING LED HIS TIGERS TOWARDS THE PETROL. FROM A SAFE DISTANCE, PIP WATCHED THEM COMING SOON THE AMERICAN WOULD TURN THE DUMP INTO A FLAMING INFERNO, TRAPPING GERMAN TANKS AND THEIR CREWS




SUDDENLY PIP FELT A STRONG SENSE OF GUILT. HE HAD ACCEPTED GENEROUS TERMS PROPOSED BY THE GERMAN COMMANDER, AND HAD TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF THEM. NOW HE WAS PLANNING THE WHOLESALE SLAUGHTER OF THE UNSUSPECTING GERMAN TANKMEN. PIP RUSHED TO THE WIRELESS SET.



HELLO, TANK  
COMMANDER - CAPTAIN  
WALKER HERE. THIS IS  
URGENT - STOP  
WHERE YOU ARE!

AT PIP WALKER'S WARNING, VON KLING HALTED HIS COLUMN DEAD. THREE MINUTES LATER, WITH A SULLEN ROAR, THE DUMP EXPLODED INTO A MASS OF RAGING FLAMES



SO THE  
ENGLANDER  
OFFICER WAS CAPTAIN  
WALKER - I SHALL  
REMEMBER THAT  
NAME

## Chapter 4. *Honourable Truce*

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE PETROL MEANT THAT THE GERMAN TANK SQUADRON WOULD HAVE TO HALT UNTIL MORE FUEL COULD BE BROUGHT UP FROM THE REAR IN TRUCKS. THE DELAY ENABLED "E" TROOP TO GET MANY MILES AWAY.



THE VILLAGE OF DEUX PONTS HAD HELD AN AMERICAN BRIGADE H.Q. AND HAD BEEN AN EARLY TARGET IN THE ARDENNES OFFENSIVE. NOW IT WAS JUST A JUMBLE OF GAUNT, ROOFLESS HOUSES.





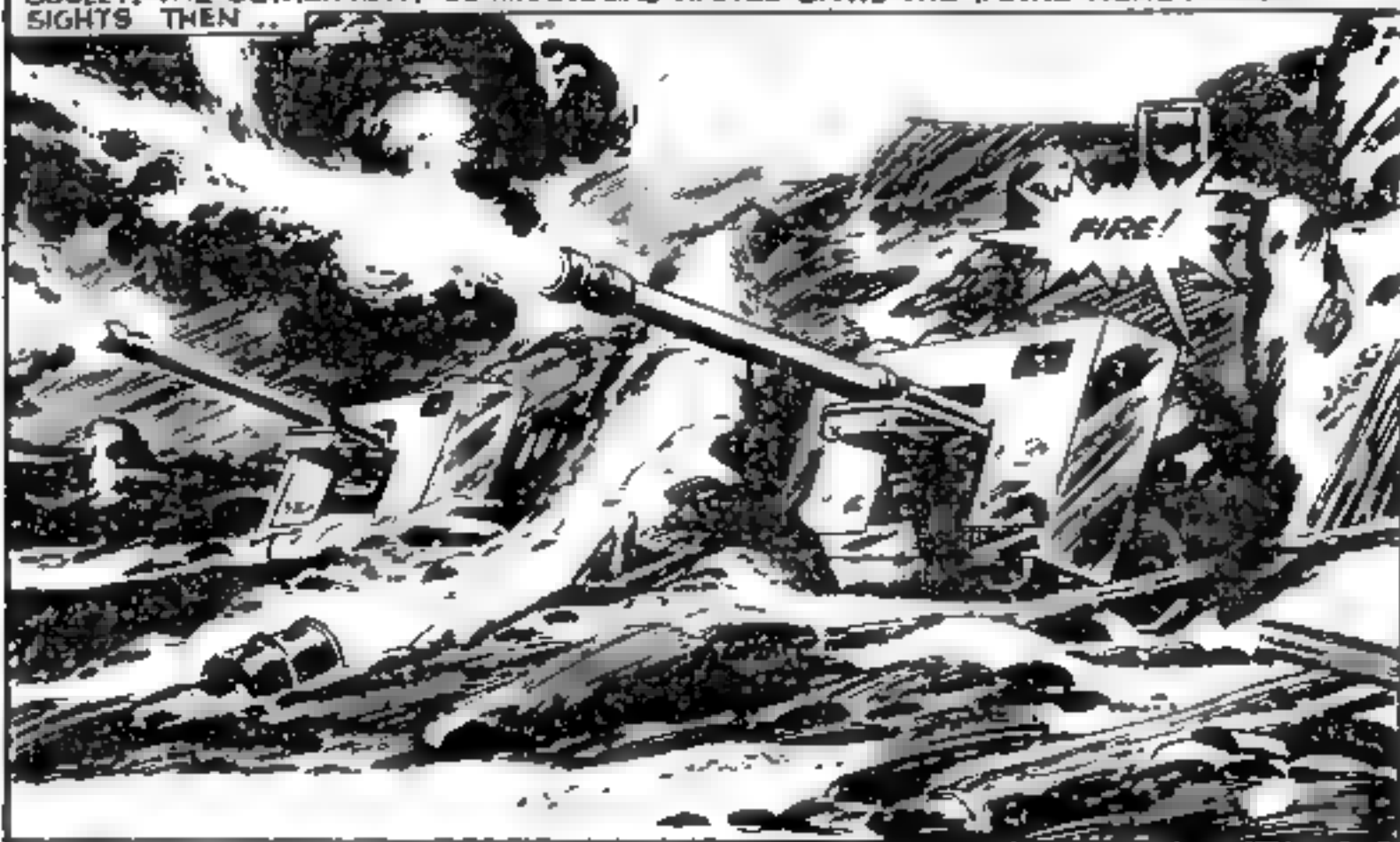
## The Mark Of The Eagle

BY THE TIME VON KLING'S SQUADRON HAD RE FUELLED AND COVERED THE MILES TO DEUX PONTS, "E" TROOP WAS IN A STRONG POSITION, READY AND WAITING.

INDIVIDUAL  
GUNF RE AT YOUR  
OWN DISCRETION  
DON'T FORGET — THE  
FIRST ROUND IS THE  
VITAL ROUND —

THE FIRST TIGER TANK CAME OUT OF THE WOODED ROAD, BRINGING DEUX PONTS INTO VIEW. ON VON KLING'S ORDER TWO TANKS DREW LEVEL WITH THE LEADER, TO PRESENT A FORMIDABLE FRONTAGE TO ANY ATTACK.

COOLLY, THE DETACHMENT COMMANDERS WAITED UNTIL THE TANKS WERE IN THEIR SIGHTS THEN ..



THE STEEL-HARD ARMOUR OF THE TANK FRONTS RESISTED EVEN ARMOUR-PIERCING SHELLS, BUT THEY HAD OTHER VULNERABLE POINTS. ONE OF THE TANKS GROUND TO A HALT AS A SHELL SMASHED THE LINKS OF ITS TRACK.



TWO OF THE TIGERS MOVED FORWARD, AN INCREASING MENACE TO THE BRITISH GUNNERS.



ONCE AGAIN A SEVENTEEN-POUNDER SHELL SMASHED THE TRACK FROM A TANK. IT SLEWED ROUND, REVEALING ITS THINNER ARMoured SIDE-PLATES. THE BRITISH SHELLS STRUCK HARD AT THE WEAKNESS.



WITH THE MASTER'S BONDAGE OF THE FORTRESS, THE AMERICAN WAS BEING FORCED TO TELL IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THE JAPANESE WOULD RUN THE BOMBERS IN THE AIR.




ON THE 15TH, THE AMERICAN WAS BEING FORCED TO TELL IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THE JAPANESE WOULD RUN THE BOMBERS IN THE AIR.






# The Mark Of The Eagle

WHEN THE DUST AND SMOKE CLEARED AWAY, THE EXTENT OF THE DESTRUCTION COULD BE SEEN. THREE BREWED-UP TANKS AND A BURNING HOUSE.



PHEW!  
THAT MUST HAVE  
SHAKEN THE JERRIES,  
BUT THERE'S STILL  
A LOT OF TIGERS  
LEFT

AS THE FIRES BURNED, THE GUNFIRE DIED DOWN. IN THE SKY, BEYOND THE RANGE OF THE FLICKERING FIRES, DARKNESS HAD NEARLY FALLEN. PIP SENT BACK TO HIS WAGON LINES FOR THE TOWING VEHICLES.



THIS IS  
OUR CHANCE  
TO PULL  
OUT,

MORE THAN A MILE AWAY, VON KLING WAS AGAIN PREPARING TO ATTACK IN DEVASTATING FORCE...



IN THE EXCITEMENT OF BATTLE, NEITHER SAW THAT THERE WAS A STIR OF LIFE IN THE BLAZING HOUSE.



## The Mark Of The Eagle

IN DEUX PONT'S IT HAD BEEN KNOWN AS THE HOUSE OF THE BLIND. A SANCTUARY FOR AGEING BLIND FOLK, SUPPORTED BY A BENEVOLENT CHARITY. A PLACE OF REST OVERTAKEN BY THE TERRORS OF WAR.

PAUL!  
THEY WILL  
KILL US, PAUL,  
I'M SO  
FRIGHTENED!

COME, MARIE  
HERE WE CANNOT  
STAY, OUR HOME  
IS ON FIRE

DURING THE GERMANS' EARLIER BOMBARDMENT, THE BLIND PATIENTS HAD BEEN LED INTO THE CELLARS FOR SHELTER, WHILE THE NURSES HAD GONE FOR HELP NEVER TO RETURN. NOW THEY WERE BEING SMOKED OUT OF THEIR SANCTUARY TO WANDER HELPLESSLY ACROSS A BATTLEFIELD WHERE SHELLS WHINED OVERHEAD.



WORKING FAST, "E" TROOP WAS PULLING OUT. THEY COULD HEAR THE DISTANT RUMBLE OF THE NAZI TANKS. SOON THEY WOULD REACH THE VILLAGE.



AS HE PEERED THROUGH THE NIGHT IN THE DIRECTION OF THE GERMAN TANKS, P.P. WALKER SAW THE VAGUE FORMS OF THE BLIND REFUGEES.



HE HAD TO GAMBLE ON THE GERMAN COMMANDER'S HUMANITY. IF THE ENEMY COULD NOT SEE THE OLD PEOPLE, THEIR DANGER WAS ACUTE. IF THEY COULD SEE THEM, THEY MIGHT STILL FIRE. BUT P.P. WAS PREPARED TO TAKE THAT CHANCE.





THE STAR SHELL WOULD SPOTLIGHT THEM AND THEIR VEHICLES—MAKE THEM A SITTING TARGET. IT WAS A GAMBLE. ALL ROUND!



THE STAR SHELL BURST OVERHEAD, ILLUMINATING THE WHOLE SCENE VIVIDLY FROM BEHIND HIS TANKS, VON KLING SAW THE HELPLESS BLIND AND "E" TROOP—OUT OF ACTION!

HERR OBERST/  
THE GUNS ARE PERFECT  
TARGETS/ GIVE THE  
ORDER TO FIRE AND  
WE WILL ELIMINATE  
THEM!



VON KLING'S FIRST THOUGHT WAS THAT IN HIS POSITION, KLEIST WOULD NOT HAVE HESITATED. BUT KLEIST HAD BEEN AN S.S. MAN AND A RABID NAZI. THE HOHLZERNDORFF EAGLE STOOD FOR SOMETHING MORE HONOURABLE.



UNIMPEDED BY THE GERMANS, PIP PACKED THE BLIND REFUGEES INTO THE TRUCKS, AND PULLED OUT. FARTHER BACK, 'E' TROOP WAS TO MAKE ANOTHER STAND.



## Chapter 5. The Last Stand

THAT WAS THE LAST THEY EXPECTED TO SEE OF THE EAGLE PANZERS. THE TROOP REJOINED THE REGIMENT AND TOOK PART IN THE MAJOR DRIVE INTO GERMANY. NEAR LUBECK, THEY WERE SITED TO COVER A ROAD JUNCTION.



IT WAS THE STRANGEST TANK THEY HAD EVER SEEN. THERE HAD BEEN NOTHING LIKE IT IN THE R TANK RECOGNITION PAMPHLETS.



CURIOUSLY, THEY WATCHED ITS STEADY, SLOW APPROACH.



SUDDENLY, JOE PRICE HURRIED ACROSS TO HIS TROOP COMMANDER





PIP'S MEN WERE HEADING TO SUDDED DEATH. THE BEETLE TANK WAS A TRACKED, MOBILE MINE...



THE TROOP COMMANDER HURLED HIMSELF AT THE SMALL GROUP OF MEN, BUNDLING THEM INTO A DITCH AT THE SIDE OF THE ROAD.



NEXT SECOND, THE BEETLE EXPLODED WITH A DEAFENING BLAST.



THE MEN OF "EASY" TROOP PICKED THEMSELVES UP, UNHURT, BUT GRUMBLING BITTERLY



FOR A WEEK THEY HELD THE POSITION, DEFYING THE GERMAN ATTEMPTS TO BLOCK THE CROSS-ROADS. AT LAST A STRANGE CONVOY CAME ROLLING ALONG...



## The Mark Of The Eagle

THE MOTLEY BUNCH WAS A PARTY OF RELEASED BRITISH PRISONERS-OF-WAR FINDING THEIR WAY HOME! PIP QUESTIONED THEM...



EXCITEDLY, PIP WALKED OVER TO THE RADIO.



PIP FOUND IT WAS TRUE / THE ACTUAL SURRENDER WOULD NOT BE SIGNED UNTIL THE FOLLOWING DAY. BUT THE NEWS HAD SPREAD FAST ALONG THE FIGHTING FRONT. EVERYBODY WAS TIRED OF WAR...



FOR THE HARD-PRESSED MEN OF E' TROOP, IT MADE A PLEASANT CHANGE TO BE ABLE TO RELAX





OF ALL THE CELEBRATING TROOP, ONLY JOE WAS STICKING TO HIS JOB. SUDDENLY A MESSAGE CAME THROUGH FROM BATTERY HEADQUARTERS...

FOR ROVER FIVE ONLY. WARNING ORDER - PREPARE TO MOVE IN ONE HOUR. MOVEMENT ORDER FOLLOWS.



ORDER TO MOVE COULD MEAN ONE OF TWO THINGS/ EITHER THEY WERE TO JOIN THE TRIUMPHANT MARCH TO BERLIN - OR THEY WERE BEING WITHDRAWN ...

WE'RE MOVING, PEDLAR/ NO MORE TANGLING WITH TANKS!



HAPPILY, "E" TROOP CAME OUT OF ACTION...

HEY, SARGE / CAN'T WE DUMP THE AMMO IN THE PIGSTY? WE DON'T WANT IT AGAIN - AN' THEY RECKON PIGGS EAT ANYTHING!



IN RECORD TIME THEY WERE READY TO ROLL. WHEN THE MESSENGER DROVE IN WITH THE MOVEMENT ORDER, THERE WAS NO HAPPIER BUNCH OF VETERANS IN NORTH-WEST EUROPE!

HERE IT COMES!  
MY GUESS IS BRUSSELS.  
THEY SAY IT'S THE  
BRIGHTEST SPOT IN  
THE WESTERN  
WORLD!



DELIGHTEDLY, THEY WATCHED AS PIP READ THE ORDER. BUT THEIR COMMANDER LOOKED GRIM AS HE TURNED TO THE SERGEANT...

SERGEANT—  
CALL A MUSTER  
PARADE. I WANT  
TO TALK TO  
THE MEN.

YES, SIR!



## The Mark Of The Eagle

THE MEN COULD FEEL THE CHANGE OF MOOD EVEN BEFORE HE SPOKE TO THEM. JOE PRICE KNEW INSTINCTIVELY THAT FATE HAD PLAYED ANOTHER TRICK ON THEM...



NOT ALL THE MEN TOOK IT AS RESIGNEDLY AS JOE PRICE



PIP WALKER WAS AS STUNNED AS ANY OF HIS MEN. HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND WHY "EASY" TROOP HAD BEEN PICKED FOR A JOB FIFTY MILES AWAY. BUT LIKE IT OR NOT, IT WAS AN ORDER /

PIPE DOWN / I'M JUST AS FED UP AS THE REST OF YOU. BUT THIS TROOP'S GOT A FINE RECORD- AND I'M NOT GOING TO SPOIL IT NOW BY A STUPID MUTINY.



IT WAS A MOROSE, DEJECTED TROOP THAT FINALLY GOT ON THE ROAD. NO MAN'S HEART WAS IN FIGHTING NOW. THE WAR WAS SUPPOSED TO BE OVER !





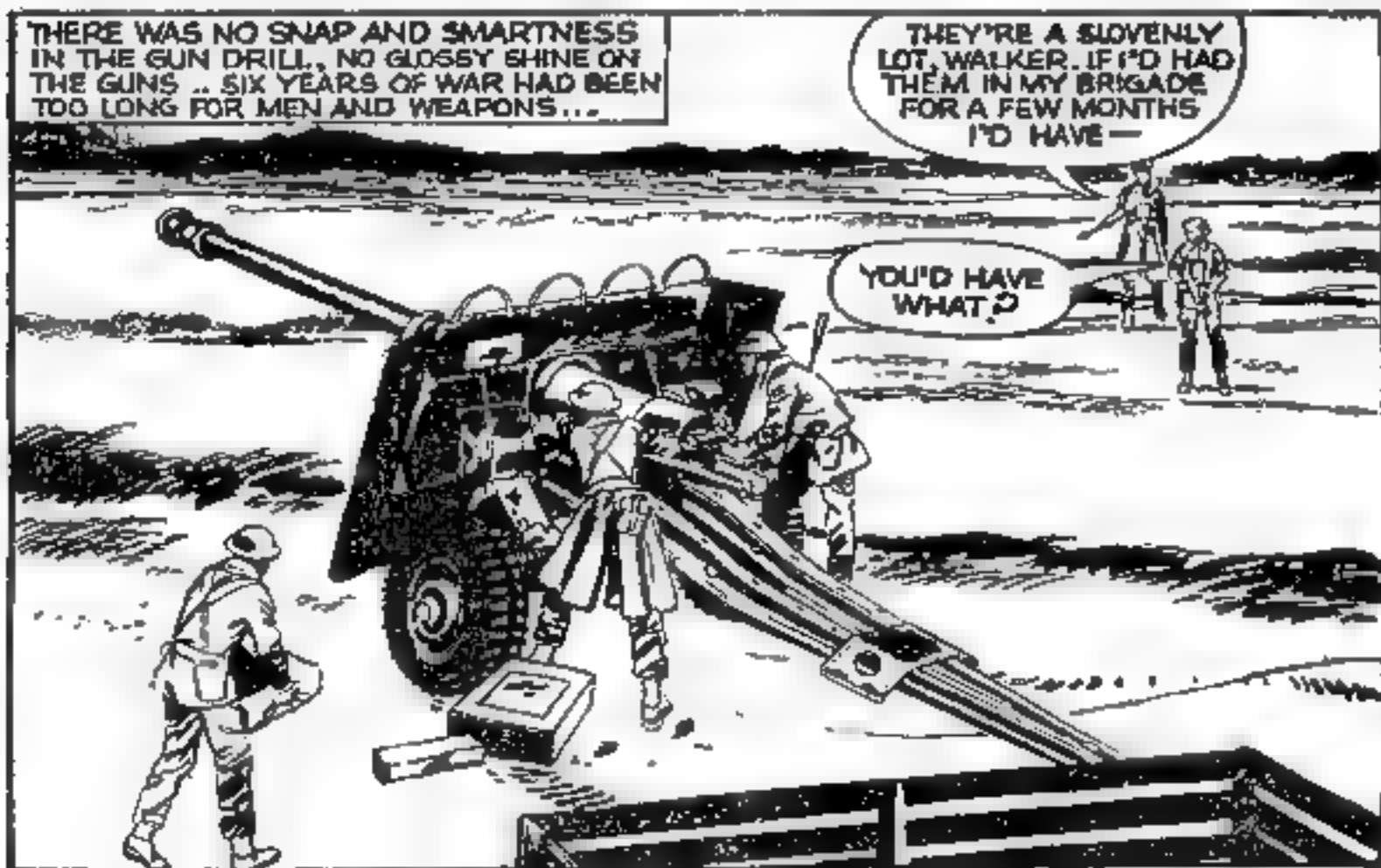
## The Mark Of The Eagle

THE RENDEZVOUS WAS ON A FLAT PLAIN NEAR A WOODED COPSE. AN IRATE BRIGADIER MET THEM



THE BRIGADIER WAS AN ANGRY MAN. THIS WAS HIS BRIGADE SECTOR AND HE HAD BEEN ORDERED BY THE GENERAL TO ACCEPT ANOTHER BRIGADIER'S ANTI-TANK TROOP TO HELP HIM OUT!





PIP ROUNDED ON THE SENIOR OFFICER, UNABLE TO CONTROL HIS ANGER ...



AS PIP SWUNG AWAY TO BRIEF HIS DETACHMENT COMMANDERS HE HEARD THE  
BRIGADIER BLUSTERING BEHIND HIM...



THE GERMAN HAD ASKED FOR HIM BY NAME & PUZZLED - PIP WALKED ON, THINKING HARD.



PIP FELT HE HAD TO SORT THIS THING OUT HIMSELF. THERE COULD BE ONLY ONE GERMAN WHO MIGHT KNOW HIM... AND HE HAD COMMANDED TIGER TANKS. HE IGNORED THE BR GADIER'S SHOUT





## The Mark Of The Eagle

AS HE ENTERED THE WOOD, HE SAW THE SMALL ARMS TRAINED ON HIM - AND BEHIND THEM THE MUZZLE OF A LONG-BARRELLED EIGHTY-EIGHT TANK GUN. ON THE TURRET WAS THE BLACK EAGLE OF HOHLZERNDORF



IT WAS VON KLING WHO CAME OUT TO MEET HIM. THE GERMAN LOOKED TIRED AND WORN, BUT HE STILL CARRIED HIMSELF WITH DIGNITY.



PIP FELT PROUD, THIS WAS THE BIGGEST COMPLIMENT THAT COULD HAVE BEEN PAID TO HIS TROOP... THAT A FIGHTING MAN LIKE VON KLING SHOULD SO RESPECT IT...

I SHALL BE  
HONoured TO ACCEPT  
YOUR SURRENDER, HERR  
OBERST. SHALL WE GO?  
THE WAR IS OVER - FOR  
BOTH OF US.

VON KLING RETURNED TO GIVE HIS ORDERS.  
HE BROUGHT BACK THE EAGLE PENNANT  
FROM HIS ARMoured CAR...

ONCE I WOULD HAVE  
SURRENDERED MY SWORD.  
INSTEAD I SURRENDER  
THIS PENNANT. THE  
HOLZERNDORFF EAGLE  
IS A TROPHY OF HONOUR,  
I ASSURE YOU.



IT WAS THE END OF JOE PRICE'S STORY...



AS LIEUTENANT-COLONEL LINDSEY WALKED BACK TO THE OFFICERS' MESS, HE STOPPED TO LOOK AT THE MALKARA MISSILES. HE WAS JOINED BY LIEUTENANT-COLONEL PIP WALKER...



... AND SO THEY DID... FOR THAT IS THE TRADITION OF THE BRITISH ARMY!

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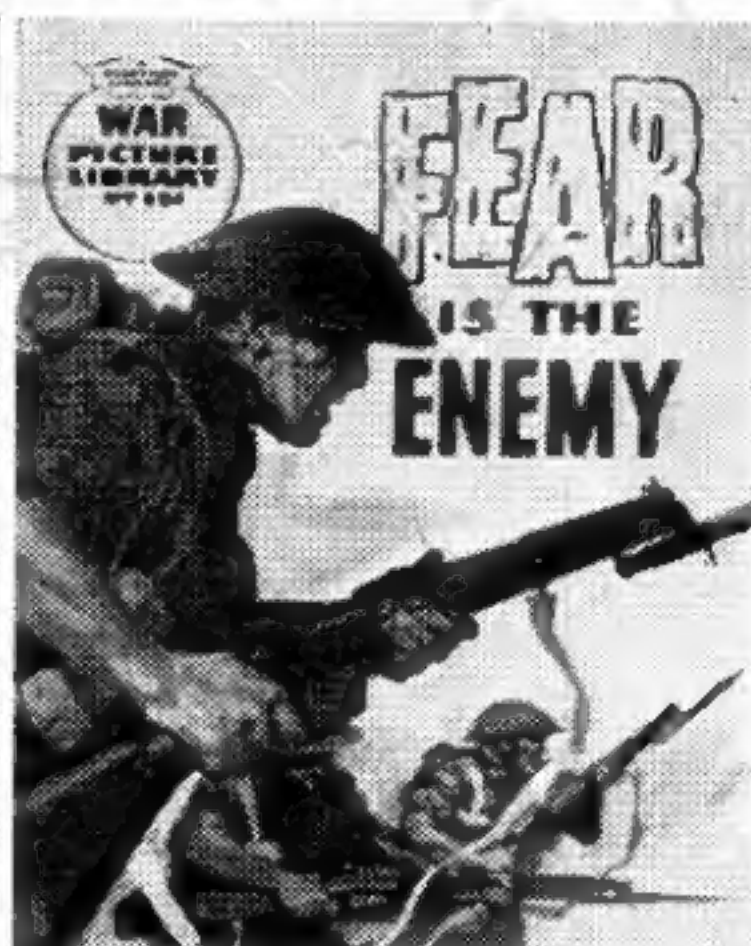
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